

# People's Reporter

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## YOGA THE UNIVERSAL REMEDY



## World Communion of Reformed Churches

Decade for Climate Justice

## Seek a just eco-spirituality

A call to listen to the marginalized, including all of God's creation, was at the center of a webinar launching the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) Decade for Climate Justice.

"We hold the economic crisis and ecological crisis as being interlinked. The way to find alternatives to this is to learn from those who are marginalized—and from the earth, which itself is marginalized in our present system," said Philip Vinod Peacock, WCRC Executive for Justice and Witness.

Helen Chukka, Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible at Wartburg Seminary, focused her presentation on the Book of Job, saying, "Job urges his friends—and us—to draw lessons from both himself and the creatures of the earth. Job emphasizes that these creatures existed before humans but are now suffering. He presents them as storytellers able to speak for themselves.

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## World Council of Churches

Central Committee

## Call to reconciliation in a fragmented world

"Let us go from here to the Americas, Asia, Africa, Europe, Oceania, and Antarctica, yes to the ends of the earth, committed to addressing the inequitable distribution of the world's resources, the irresponsible practices which exploit the environment resulting in food insecurity, poverty, and conflicts. Motivated by hope, which is assured though not yet fully realized, we press on, addressing crime, racism, misogyny, divisiveness, hate, greed, conflicts, and wars."

The first meeting of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, since the Committee was elected at the WCC 11th Assembly, was held in Geneva from 21 to 27 June.

"Motivated by our hope in Christ, let us continue to play our part in God's mission to the whole world as agents of reconciliation in a broken and fragmented world," said the Committee's Vice-Moderator, Rev. Merlyn Hyde Riley, in her sermon at the meeting's closing prayer on 27 June.

"We return to situations of distress and dissatisfaction, pain and suffering but our

spirit of thanksgiving will serve as a source of inspiration to fellow believers and witness to unbelievers and seekers as we keep focus on the work of God in Jesus Christ. We are returning to different expressions of life and circumstances. For some, we will return to a life filled with insecurity and uncertainty and for others to life and circumstances that are spiralling out of control. Hymns, prayers, and readings at the closing prayer were drawn from the spiritual life resources of the WCC's 8th Assembly which met around the theme "Turn to God: Rejoice in Hope" in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1998," said Hyde Riley.



WCC Central Committee - A morning worship

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"Let us go from here to the Americas, Asia, Africa, Europe, Oceania, and Antarctica, yes to the ends of the earth, committed to addressing the inequitable distribution of the world's resources, the irresponsible practices which exploit the environment resulting in food insecurity, poverty, and conflicts," said Hyde Riley.

The agenda of the meeting included developing the strategic direction and programmatic response to the Assembly as a pilgrimage of justice, reconciliation and unity. The Central Committee adopted a strategic plan to guide the work of the Council until the next Assembly, as well as a financial strategy and communications strategy to support the work of the Council.

The Central Committee also addressed emerging issues affecting the life and witness of the churches. A series of pilgrimage plenaries engaged the Central Committee in addressing the unity and mission of the church and the call to act for justice and reconciliation as inspired by the Assembly.

— WCC News

Please see pages 5 & 6



# People's Reporter

## A new era of partnership between India and the US!

To the surprise of many across the world, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to the US in the last week of June has heralded a new era of friendship and co-operation between the two countries, India and the U.S. In May 1998, when the US imposed sanction against India for testing a nuclear bomb, the relation between the two countries went to the worst. Since then, India was treated as a non-favoured country for trade-relations, and this became worse owing to India's refusal to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. However, keeping this aside, the US could rope in India as a member of QUAD to resist the power of China in the Indo-Pacific region. But, India's co-operation with Russia and Iran, the arch-enemies of the U.S., especially the decision to buy oil and arms from Russia rejecting US's call for sanctions against that country, in the wake of Russia-Ukraine war, again spoiled the space for friendly relations.

Viewed from these developments, the signing of the new deals for the US investment and partnership in high-end defence, semiconductor, quantum and advanced computing and AI industry, marks a surprising change in the relation between the two countries. The new jet engine deal that promises 80% technology transfer by General Electric to Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd is expected to enhance the defence capability of India considerably. By rolling out the red carpet to the Prime Minister, President Joe Biden said that the Indo-US partnership would be one of the 'defining relationship of the 21<sup>st</sup> century'. Many analysts, in the international circles, raised their eyebrows owing to the sudden change in the approach of the US to India.

It is by allowing exceptions to many of their pet principles that the US administration ventured to treat India as a favoured nation. It must be noted that 75 members of the US Congress at the time of the visit of the Prime Minister of India raised their voice against India's deficit in respecting democracy and human rights, and in the protection of religious minorities. Some liberal Democrat law-makers boycotted Mr. Modi's address to the joint session of the Congress, and former President Obama in an interview criticised the deficit in the minority rights in India. Rejecting the pet principles of the US and all these objections, in his speech welcoming Mr. Modi, President Biden said that rights issues were not bilateral issues. Such a sudden change in the relation of the U.S. with India should be evaluated very carefully and cautiously.

Many wonder at the reason behind this sudden change in the approach of the US. At the outset, it is the economic and strategic interests that persuaded India to shed her Non-alignment hangover, and to abandon her belief in 'American exceptionalism'. The US has been immensely desirous of capturing the market, especially the arms market in the \$3 billion Indian economy. The US also values India's geography in Asia to counter China and wants to break India's friendly relations with Russia and Iran, her arch enemies. On the other side, India has been feeling the need for capital and technology in strategic areas.

Although the treaty promises various benefits to India, analysts raise doubts about the real outcome. The US has the questionable record of withdrawing from treaties after appropriating short-term benefits. How much benefits will be released when actual implementation of the treaties is worked out in the long term is another thing one has to wait and see. How much autonomy India will lose is yet another question. There are highly justifiable reasons for doubting about the real benefit of the treaty. Let us hope that the spirit of friendly treaty would be protected for mutual benefit and for international peace.

## Thought for the Fortnight

*Every time you smile at some one,  
it is an action of love,  
a gift to that person,  
a beautiful thing.*

— Mother Teresa

## M. M. Thomas Birth Anniversary Lecture - 4

### The Role of Christians in a Democratic, Pluralistic and Multicultural Indian Society

## Urging Changes in Churches

Solomon Victus

Succumbing and surrendering to the idols of status and prosperity is not the mission of Jesus and the church.

Archbishop William Temple used to say that the church is the only organisation that exists for others.

Can we claim that we are able to witness this experience in India today?

What is the distinctive identity of the church today from other religious and cultural organisations?

The life of Christianity is called to be distinctive

in matters of ideology, values and understanding about social transformation.

*(Fourth part of the paper, presented at the 'M. M. Thomas Birth Anniversary Celebrations' organized by the Tiruvalla Sangam at Pennamma Bhavanam, Tiruvalla, on 13th May 2023)*

As we are aware, there are many predominant ethnic communities within the Christian communities practising implicit and explicit presence of majoritarianism as well as exclusivism.

Why should the minorities in Christianity always be supposed to fight for their rights? To get a fair and due place in the church leads to so many demands, cries, struggles, court verdicts, etc. Church and institutional structures are not the properties of one single community. **Majority communities within the churches need to show a way of initiating accommodative politics, especially proportional representation especially for minorities and setting up a model of celebrating plurality.** The question remains, **why are not we, the members of the church, not practising plurality in the church while we expect the secular world to offer us all minority privileges? While Christians are themselves minorities, how are they able to treat the 'other' minorities within minorities? Competitive attitudes with the tiny minorities which have grown over the years must be ceased. This is the reason why theologians like Arvind Nirmal, a staunch defender of Dalit theology, spoke on 'methodological exclusivism'.**

M. M. Thomas while dealing with the minority consciousness of the church warns that **we are not confident enough in representing the full body of Christ in India, '... a non-communal form of the church in a situation where religious**



The Rev. Dr. Solomon Victus is a former Professor of Social Analysis at Tamilnadu Theological Seminary, Madurai

communalism has become a serious national problem, and the church, organised as a minority community, separates itself from the majority and other minority communities, each safeguarding its numerical strength and its own traditional personal law and seeking communal prestige and communal political power in the body-politic, makes conversion of groups and even individuals, a problem of inter-communal relations. To me more important is the fact that so long as the church remains a religious community in competition with other religious communities, the church can never say that in Christ it sacramentally represents the destiny of all peoples in the country.<sup>124</sup>

Space for peaceful political demonstrations and dissent, has shrunk drastically, and survival of trade union activities in this context of neo-liberal fascist context, is facing extinction. The political parties are divided on the basis of ideologies and strategies without recognising the catastrophic fascist tendencies on their doorsteps. New social movements are silenced; NGOs and action groups are paralyzed by the Union Government intervention. Internationally, post-

Corona economic crises, Russian war in Ukraine, weak economy of the so-called empires and the emergence of China as a regional super power have upset the balance of the world power equilibrium. The democratic voice of the working class has been strangled in recent decades in the name of neo-liberal economic policies. The Corporates feel very safe and confident, especially in Indian undemocratic monolithic political developments, especially with the blessings of right wing ideological parties.

**What is the meaning of Christian presence in a pluralistic context if the church is silent? All the allied forces including the churches need to have open dialogue on the question who is the real adversary. When I find differences of opinion among the political parties in opposing fascist tendencies my heart bleeds as they take another path rather than rallying round single-mindedly fighting fascism. It is the same with churches today. Just for the sake of maintaining party prestige, power and authority, they fight each other. Fascism is capable of making use of any petty difference between the rivals and breaks them to its advantage. If the church is unwilling to surrender the current status quo, it may tend to join or never hesitate to join with fascist forces. This happened in the German Protestant Church and its theologians. To protest against fascism it requires stamina, and the Jewish history and literature provide other examples of men and women who are not afraid to argue with God and to protest on behalf of other people. Protest is a sign of faith.<sup>25</sup>**

Without maintaining inner democracy, how would we be

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## People's Reporter

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## Contemporary Discourses On Feminist Foreign Policy In India And In The South Asia

Vibhuti Patel

The first instance of Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) was recorded when Dr. Hansa Mehta, as the Indian delegate to the United Nations Human Rights Commission (1947-1948), courageously convinced the world leaders to make amendment in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from "All men are born free and equal" to "All human beings are born free and equal".

Over the last 75 years, South Asian Feminist Foreign Policy (SAFFP) has strived for transnational solidarity to fight against sexual and sexist violence; education of women and girls, and that of men and boys; economic emancipation of women; women's leadership in politics and decision-making and involving women in peace negotiations and treaties.

Formed in 1985, the official body, South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) provided the feminists of the member countries - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and

The first ever Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) summit in April 2022 in Lund, Sweden, echoed 'Women's Rights are Human Rights' and highlighted gender based violence, trafficking, refugee crisis. The summit accepted the need for a paradigm shift from being reactive to being proactive. Feminist perspectives in international relations demand deconstruction of hegemonic power structures and systems that create policies that favour a microscopic minority. Hence it is imperative to challenge patriarchal systems of injustice, exclusion, exploitation, oppression, marginalisation that perpetuate inequality.

Sri Lanka to exchange ideas; provide support and solidarity to human rights defenders, fight against draconian and misogynist legislations, amplify voices of the women's movement in each of the South Asian Countries demanding gender just family laws and replicate best practices of gender equity and equality in each country. During the SAARC decade for Girls (1990-2000), many opportunities were provided in terms of conferences, seminars, exposure trips for girls of the member countries, who are now, in their forties.

In South Asia, the official discourse in diplomacy revolves around 'gender equality'; at the same time, the feminist movement has been equally vociferous in foreign policy in the transnational feminist solidarity efforts during and after the UN



Dr. Vibhuti Patel has been active in the feminist movement in India since 1970s. She has interacted intensely with the south Asian feminists over the last 45 years in regional workshops, consultations, conferences, investigation visits, training programmes. During the UN Decade for Women (1975-1985) she was representing India in Asian Women Research and Action Network (AWRAN). In 1986, she organised Asian Conference on Women, Religion and Family Laws in which feminists from all South Asian countries and Southeast Asian Countries had actively participated. In 2005, she represented India on behalf of UNFPA to make presentation on 'Sex Selective Abortions and Declining Sex Ratio in South Asia' at UN CSW EcoSoc. In 2014, she conducted a session on 'Gender Responsive Budgeting in South Asia' for delegates of 8 South Asian Countries Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

International Women's Decade (1975-1985) onwards. Since 1975, the South Asian Feminist Movement has consistently called for a state to promote values and good practices to achieve gender equality, and to guarantee all women enjoy their human rights, through diplomatic relations. The SAFFP is prevalent in peace-building efforts at grass roots levels in the war/civil war-torn countries such as Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Myanmar. The South Asian feminists have played pivotal role in making international development aid gender responsive, with an objective of financing for gender equality by reducing gender gaps in education, health care, employment, decision making power and by addressing gender based violence through direct intervention. They have actively taken part in capacity

building workshops for the region on gender responsive participatory budgeting anchored by UN Women.

SAFFP has aimed at gender parity in diplomacy by increasing women's representation in posts of ambassador.

Over the last 45 years, the South Asian feminists have unanimously accepted the action agenda of addressing the issues in the diplomatic missions regarding the marginalised such as ethnic-linguistic-religious minorities, oppressed castes and suppressed nationalities who continue to face intersectional vulnerabilities and exclusion from development intervention.

As a central concern of FFP Gender equality ensures that women and girls enjoy fundamental human rights that the global community must strive for, as an obligation within our international commitments and pre-requisites to achieving broader foreign policy goals of peace making/peace building

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### M. M.Thomas Birth Anniversary Lecture - 4

## The Role of Christians in a Democratic, Pluralistic and Multicultural Indian Society

# Urging Changes in Churches

>>> Contd. from Page 2 Col. 4

able to be critical of upper level autocratic- and power-centric culture? Here comes the role of the prophetic approach of the churches. Some of the undemocratic heads of the churches are restless because of the tremendous pressure from the people of God, and some of those leaders are even willing to join the right wing ideological position to sustain their ambitious goals. They need to remember that succumbing and surrendering to the idols of status and prosperity is not the mission of Jesus and the church. Archbishop William Temple used to say that the church is the only organisation that exists for others. Can we claim that we are able to witness this experience in India today? What is the distinctive identity of the church today from other religious and cultural organisations? The life of Christianity is called to be distinctive in matters of ideology, values and understanding about social transformation.

The current state of political culture is rather different from MMT's time. When Mrs Indira Gandhi was using the rod of MISA on democratic institutions and individuals, MMT made his voice

MMT was more concerned about the church's mission with Indian realities such as 'religious and Ideological pluralism' than about developing exclusivist politics. I think that he was dealing with balancing pluralism rather than allowing one ideology behaving like big fish eating small fishes, which is very dangerous to the society.

vocal through his articles in the weekly, *Guardian* of Madras. I wonder what would be his reaction to the political culture of the right wing ideologies ruling today, squeezing and murdering all the democratic structures in the name of nationalism! I find the nature of the current approach of the state is more dangerous than in Mrs Indira Gandhi's time

and it has become very close to fascism. MMT was well aware of the Hindutva forces which were known for consolidation of conservative forces as their long cherished dream of making India a nation of one religion. As we all know, the sense of nationalism is totally distorted by the right wing religious ideologists. If we compare our

current political situation with the preliminary period of the National Socialism of Germany we will not find much difference. Yet the glimpses of a new horizon are appearing in many parts of India, reversing the trend of Hindutva.

MMT was more concerned about the church's mission with Indian realities such as 'religious and Ideological pluralism' than

about developing exclusivist politics. I think that he was dealing with balancing pluralism rather than allowing one ideology behaving like big fish eating small fishes, which is very dangerous to the society. Though he explicitly developed a strong affinity with Marxism, he also developed a critique of Stalinism and journeyed again through Gandhism and the socialism of Lohia, and global ecumenism which allowed him a widening horizon rather than rejecting and being limited to one ideological stream.<sup>26</sup>

#### Footnotes

<sup>24</sup> M. M.Thomas, *The Churches' Mission and Post-Modern Humanism*, Thiruvalla: CSS & ISPCK, 1996, p.134.

<sup>25</sup> Hans Ucko, *Common Roots, New Horizons: Learning about Christian Faith from Dialogue with Jews*, Geneva: WCC, Risk Book Series, 1994, p. 59.

<sup>26</sup> Gabriel Dietrich, "M. M. Thomas: Centenary of a Christian Marxist", EPW, Mumbai, July 30, 2016, p.26.



When the  
MISS  
SINGS,  
we see the  
MISSING  
Link!

To be continued

In the next issue

Making  
the 'Reign of God',  
an Inclusive  
Concept



## Young People's Column

# The Justice Dilemma

Koushik P. J.

Court scenes from movies and serials are my favourites. The arguments and the clever usage of laws and words to convince the judge or the jury (in American courts) have always excited and intrigued me.

When closely observed, we see two parties in a court-proceeding - namely the petitioner and the respondent. The petitioner is the person who files the complaint and the respondent is the party which responds to the complaint. One of the parties will have come to the court with the right position and the other would be representing their unjust stand. But ironically, both parties will be asking the court and the judge or Jury to grant Justice.

In the book of Kings, we find a similar tableau in a court. We see two mothers who are in the court of King Solomon. One of the mothers has been impeded and violated when the other lady in

Christ stands in between our sin and the parent God. Hence, the question arises in terms of salvation. Do we, as sinners or violators of the moral yardstick, have the right to ask God for Justice in our lives? Or should we seek forgiveness for our violations?

the room stole her baby and is unjustly claiming the baby as her own.<sup>1</sup> Ironically, both are asking for Justice. While most of us focus on the wisdom exhibited by King Solomon, we fail to look at the incident from the perspective of the violated party. The King succeeds in finding the just pleading, and Justice prevailed.

However, a difficult question propped up. When violated, should one ask for Justice? Or should the violated person or people ask for the forgiveness of the offender? From the case study of King Solomon's court, one could ascertain that if the violated mother hadn't sought Justice, she probably would have lost her child. But as Christians, looking at our own lives on the basis of Christological viewpoint, we would tend to choose



Architect Koushik P. J. is, now, a B.D. student at United Theological College, Bangalore. He was an Intern in the Dept. of Ecological Concerns of the CSI Synod.

forgiveness. But it is futile to say that we'd practise what we preach. It is a difficult question indeed. Should one ask for Justice? Or forgive?

Luke 6:29 says, "If anyone

strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat, do not withhold even your shirt." As part of the Nazareth manifesto, Jesus never instructs the violated to ask for Justice. He however proceeds to talk about the Parent God in verse 36-37, "But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return.....Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful..... Forgive and you will be forgiven." As much as liberation is being talked about in terms of seeking Justice and even political action, Christ's teaching only instructs forgiveness and inaction, with God as the yardstick.

God's forgiveness for us as each individual was gained through Jesus Christ. Because of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, for us sinners and violators, we

are saved from the Judgement due in the apocalyptic events. Christ stands in between our sin and the parent God. Hence, the question arises in terms of salvation. Do we, as sinners or violators of the moral yardstick, have the right to ask God for Justice in our lives? Or should we seek forgiveness for our violations?

In the same line of thought, we are impeded and violated by people around us many a time. What would we do? Ask for Justice? Or forgive? This conclusion does not give a closure. It rather is open ended and can only be answered by the individuals in question to exercise their free will responsibly.

"Jesus said, Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Luke 23:34

Footnote

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 3:16-28 NRSV

## Contemporary Discourses On

# Feminist Foreign Policy In India And In The South Asia

>>> **Contd. from Page 3 Col. 5** and peace-keeping, security, and sustainable development.

**There is a consensus among the South Asian feminists that the universal understanding of FFP needs to be interpreted in intersectional feminist perspective that is responsive to post-colonial socio-cultural reality, hierarchical international relations, local political dynamics, lived experiences of citizens in a specific country and diverse voices need to be taken into consideration.**

The first ever Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) summit in April 2022 in Lund, Sweden, echoed 'Women's Rights are Human Rights' and highlighted gender based violence, trafficking, refugee crisis. The summit accepted the need for paradigm shift from being reactive to being proactive. Feminist perspectives in international relations demand deconstruction of hegemonic power structures and systems that create policies that favour a microscopic minority. Hence it is imperative to challenge patriarchal systems of injustice, exclusion, exploitation, oppression, marginalisation that perpetuate inequality. The FFP focuses not only on international relations between the nation states but also on political cultures and schools of thought that reflect their economic, political priorities and human rights of the socio-economically underserved sections.

SAFFP challenges the international division of labour that subordinates women by segregating women in the monotonous, low paid, low status, dead-end industrial jobs and low-end precarious jobs in the service sector or platform-based gig economy. SAFFP challenges the gender stereotypes of viewing man as either aggressor or protector and the women as the victim in need of protection.

### India's Gender Commitments in Foreign Policy

India ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1993; India promised to implement the United Nations MDGs 3 in 2000. In 2005, India responded to the UN call for gender responsive budgeting. India proactively supported UN peacekeeping efforts in Liberia in 2007 by sending an all-women peacekeeping contingent that was applauded by the global leaders.

In 2015, India sent three women police units to the UN Peace keeping missions in Africa. In 2015, India officially adopted Sustainable Development Goal (UN SDG) five on gender equality. India has been contributing to foreign assistance for empowerment of women by offering technical support to SAARC Development Fund (SDF). In 2020 India became a member of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. **Still there are many gaps. In the foreign service and diplomatic positions, proportion of women at the higher echelons is limited.** India's ratification of CEDAW is

partial as it has not ratified its 'optional protocol' that allows direct access to the CEDAW committee if the national redressal systems are found apathetic or hostile. Indian women peace-keeping forces in Liberia and Africa were mostly involved in providing care and support. FFP views Diplomacy a tool for security and peace. Today we have Dr. Swarna Rajagopalan to kick start the deliberations on FFP in the Monsoon School.

### Conclusion

**There cannot be peace without economic justice, social justice, environmental justice, gender justice and distributive justice.** In the current context of post-pandemic scenario, Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) aims at transnational solidarity to fight against gender based violence; trafficking of women and children, barbaric behaviour of the nation states with the migrants and political refugees, promote education of women and girls, and that of men and boys by reducing digital divide; ensure economic emancipation of women across the world; endorse women's leadership in politics and decision-making and involve women in peace negotiations and treaties.

The SAFFP demands from the international relations experts to assess socio-cultural, economic, and political issues from an intersectional gendered perspective as it will ensure a deeper appreciation of gender differential impact of, and responses to, the existing as well as unfolding realities.

SAFFP challenges the international division of labour that subordinates women by segregating women in the monotonous, low paid, low status, dead-end industrial jobs and low-end precarious jobs in the service sector or platform-based gig economy. SAFFP challenges the gender stereotypes of viewing man as either aggressor or protector and the women as the victim in need of protection. Thought-out the human history, we have witnessed situations when men have also been victims in conflicts-situation as prisoners of war and have faced physical and sexual torture.

Leadership, ownership, direction, action plan, support, social solidarity in times of crisis, new data with gender lens are need of the hour to make SAFFP not just a rhetoric but a reality for 3 Rs - Rights, Representations and Resources.

India's inclusion in the United Nations Commission on Status of Women (CSW) as an elected member in September 2020 because of her commitments to international agreements towards gender equality; solidarity and support provided by India, in terms of medicines and vaccines, to industrialised as well as developing countries; India assuming Presidency of G20 from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022; all these factors combined together have intensified dialogue about India's great potential to make crucial advances in feminist foreign policy. The official discourses use terminology of 'Gender equality', 'Gender responsive' and 'Gender sensitive' approach for measures to incorporate FFP in its international relations.

**In the post pandemic India, several think tanks and diplomatic institutions have started organising round-tables in collaborations with the Consulate Generals of Sweden, France, Mexico, Germany, Canada with a mission that adopting the FFP framework in the Indian context will deepen the global understanding on how a developing democratic nation that comes from strong cultures of patriarchal gender norms strives for a gender transformative nation building by adoption of an FFP Framework.**



World Council of Churches:

Central Committee Minutes On

# Various Pressing Issues

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC), met in Geneva from 21 to 27 June 2023. It received reports and appeals on a wide range of issues affecting the sustainability, security, peace, rights, dignity, life and work of churches, communities and people around the world, including but not limited to the following.

## 1. Endorsement of Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, and preparation for COP28

The Central Committee is meeting in a time when we are experiencing record sea surface temperatures, record high air temperatures and record low sea ice extent.<sup>1</sup> Recalling the "Living Planet" Statement of the WCC 11th Assembly<sup>2</sup>, the statement of the WCC Executive Committee on the 27th Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27)<sup>3</sup>, and plenary presentations and discussions in our meeting, **we acknowledge that while some measures for the alleviation of the impacts of climate change are ongoing, the primary root causes of the climate crisis, namely fossil fuels, are barely addressed. Accordingly, the nations most affected but least responsible for the climate crisis are seeking a negotiating**

**The Central Committee**  
*Joins the growing chorus of faith voices calling for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty to strengthen and codify legal obligations with respect to the global phase out of fossil fuels.*  
*Invites the continued solidarity and support of all members of the worldwide ecumenical fellowship for the churches and peoples of Africa, and for all people of African descent in their ongoing search for equal human rights.*  
*Expresses its grave concern about the humanitarian consequences of the recent suspension of food aid to Ethiopia by USAID and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) due to allegations of corruption, misuse and diversion of the provided aid.*

mandate for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty to lead us out of this crisis.<sup>4</sup>

### The Central Committee:

**Joins** the growing chorus of faith voices calling for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty to strengthen and codify legal obligations with respect to the global phase out of fossil fuels.

**Requests** the general secretary and staff, in consultation with WCC member churches and partners, to develop a statement for COP28 addressing urgent issues, including the need for Climate Financing for Adaptation and Loss and Damage; "Climate Colonialism"- the promotion of carbon trading, climate insurance, 'green' and 'blue' and soft loans instead of grants; the current and emerging human health and livelihood crisis associated with the ecological crisis; and relocation and migration with dignity as a result of climate-induced displacement.

## 2. Ecumenical Solidarity

## with Africa and People of African Descent

Recalling previous statements and actions by the WCC in relation to Africa and People of African Descent, and in this year of significant anniversaries, the Central Committee:

**Observes and commemorates** that this year also marks the 60th anniversaries of both the African Union and the All Africa Conference of Churches, and of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, as well as the 70th anniversary of independence for the Bahamas.

**Draws attention** to the fact that our meeting takes place concurrently with the 'June Nineteenth' Freedom Celebration in the USA.

**Invites** the continued solidarity and support of all members of the worldwide ecumenical fellowship for the churches and peoples of Africa, and for all people of African descent in their ongoing search

for equal human rights.

## 3. Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh)

Recalling previous statements and actions by the WCC, and profoundly concerned about the humanitarian crisis in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) due to the closure and blockade by Azerbaijan of the Lachin corridor, the only road connecting Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) to Armenia, the Central Committee:

**Calls** on Azerbaijan and other forces involved for the immediate lifting of the blockade and to re-open the Lachin corridor to allow for the two-way free and safe passage of civilians, transport, and goods along the corridor and to guarantee unimpeded humanitarian access to alleviate the suffering of the Armenian population of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh).

**Requests** the general secretary to explore the possibility of an ecumenical solidarity delegation visit to the region, and/or other timely measures to address the

situation.

**Calls** on all member churches and ecumenical partners to remain engaged in Christian solidarity with the churches and people of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh in their search for a just and sustainable peace.<sup>5</sup>

## 4. Suspension of Food Aid to Ethiopia by USAID and WFP

In support of the statements and letters from the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and from the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Ethiopia, the Central Committee:

**Expresses** its grave concern about the humanitarian consequences of the recent suspension of food aid to Ethiopia by USAID and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) due to allegations of corruption, misuse and diversion of the provided aid.

**Appeals** to USAID and WFP, while investigating these allegations, to resume urgently this essential assistance to Ethiopian communities and people whose lives depend on it.

**Encourages** the three churches (EOTC, EECMY and Catholic Bishops' Conference), together with other ecumenical partners in Ethiopia, to continue

Contd. Page 6 Col. 1 ..>>>

## Centre for Theological Leadership Training

## Graduation Ceremony

# A Theological College With A Difference

>>> Contd. from Page 8 Col. 4

**Delivering the Director's Address the Rt. Rev. Dr. P. J. Lawrence, the Founder Director of the CTLT said, "Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever! Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom He has redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south."**

"Along with the Psalmist, we at CTLT-Cayman "give thanks to God, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures for ever!" This academic year, we especially thank God for gathering together students from East and West and North and South to study at CTLT. At this graduation, we have students graduating from the Netherlands, UK, Tanzania, USA, India, Cayman Islands and Jamaica".

"At CTLT, we strive to educate and empower believers with biblical and theological teachings and impart skills in evangelism, counselling, and communication to reach out to those in need of the Good News of Jesus Christ. We request that you all kindly promote and support the efforts of CTLT in fulfilling our vision and mission: "To equip God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up." Ephesians 4:12. I take this opportunity to thank our



The CTLT's Founder  
Rt. Rev Dr. P.J Lawrence  
delivers the Director's address

president, Bishop Dr. Clayton Martin, for his continued guidance to CTLT. Our Administrator Winston Vernon, whose painstaking efforts are the backbone of CTLT, and the patronage of our lecturers and students are much appreciated. Special thanks to our Chief Guest Pastor, Terrance Bob, for his challenging message today and for his continued support to CTLT. Thank you all for encouraging us with your presence and prayers. God bless."

CTLT Senior Faculty

Members conferred an honorary doctorate degree upon Pastor Alson Ebanks of the Church of God Chapel, Walkers Road, who is a Lecturer in the New Testament Greek at the CTLT.

One by one each of the graduates was called onto the stage to receive their certificates, beginning with the Certificate programme. Next came the Bachelors, and finally, the Masters students, many of whom have been with CTLT for four years.

**Valedictorians from each group came on stage to give their addresses. Sis. Laticia Vassell from the Certificate Group spoke. Sis. Simone Yallop, a lay reader in an Anglican diocese of the Netherlands and Masters graduate Bro. Glenford Wray spoke representing the student community.**

– CTLT News

"Along with the Psalmist, we at CTLT-Cayman "give thanks to God, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures for ever!"  
 This academic year, we especially thank God for gathering together students from East and West and North and South to study at CTLT.  
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Church Too:

# Towards a De-Clericalized Church Practising Solidarity with the Survivors

George Zachariah

We live in a time when there is an alarming rise in the allegations regarding sexual harm committed by members of the clergy. There is also an equally disturbing mushrooming of profit-mongering social media channels that sensationalize such alleged incidents.

Unfortunately, the mainstream response to clergy sexual abuse is informed by patriarchal norms of morality. The Church leadership also seems to be in a dilemma in taking disciplinary actions against the perpetrators due to ecclesiastical traditions and pastoral obligations. **Amidst this sensationalized and moralistic outcry, the voices of the survivors remain unheard. The injury and trauma inflicted upon them, both mentally and physically, seem to be disregarded by all. After all, moral policing is essentially patriarchal and status quoist, and the survivors will never ever get justice through such moralistic campaigns.**

In our mainstream moralistic discussions, sexual violence is always perceived as an immoral act committed by individuals. Consequently, we tend to keep the survivors also under suspicion. What concerns us more than the fundamental issue of natural justice inherent in a non-consensual sexual assault is the immorality involved in it.

Amidst the sensationalized and moralistic outcry, the voices of the survivors remain unheard. The injury and trauma inflicted upon them, both mentally and physically, seem to be disregarded by all. After all, moral policing is essentially patriarchal and status quoist, and the survivors will never ever get justice through such moralistic campaigns.

That is why we are more worried about the involvement of clergy in immoral sexual practices. Our objective is not to ensure justice and healing to the survivors but to restore conventional morality in church and society through media trials and the expulsion of the perpetrators. Here, the victims and survivors become mere pawns in our moralistic campaigns.

One of the primary reasons for the rise in clergy abuse of power including non-consensual sexual aggression is the power and divine authority bestowed upon them through ordination. **Despite the theological realization that all structures and individuals are susceptible to sin, we continue to propagate the myth that the church and the clergy are divine and holy.** This myth has always been used conveniently by the church and the clergy to provide spiritual justification for their sins and evil. The general perception of ordained ministry as the only



Dr. George Zachariah is a theological educator currently serving the Trinity Methodist Theological College, Auckland, Aotearoa, New Zealand.

divinely ordained vocation further strengthens the hierarchical structure of the church presenting clergy as the epitome of morality and authority. This unquestionable power and holiness attributed to the clergy is the root cause for all manifestations of clergy abuse of power including sexual abuse. When the faithful internalize this distorted understanding of

ordination and clergy, they stop resisting and complaining about clergy sexual abuse fearing divine curses and punishment. It is not the moral degradation of a few clergymen that makes the church unsafe for women and other vulnerable people. We need to contest and destabilize our dominant theology and ecclesiology that valorize priestly authority and holiness. Patriarchy is essentially an issue of power.

It is in this context that we need to interrogate clericalism. Clericalism is a form of power structure that attributes all power of sacramental celebration, theological knowledge, and decision-making to members of the clergy on whom this kind of power is imparted by ordination. It perpetuates a top-down power relation and creates dependency. Ordination is a ritual that "sets apart" an individual from the community of brothers to the community of priests. This ritual symbolically marks a change of

DNA in the ordained. **Through ordination, a metamorphosis happens, and they become reverends—holy people with high moral uprightness.** By placing clergy in a high pedestal far away from and above the laity, their ontological separateness from the laity is theologically established. Consequently, the clergy is considered by society as the embodiment of all moral virtues. This status is both a privilege and an obligation for the clergy. **It is wrong and cruel to consider priests as moral exemplars, denying the fact that they too are human beings susceptible to evil as ordinary people.** However, the façade of authority and holiness attributed to them by the church and society plays a significant role in their abuse of power, including sexual misconduct.

**Two suggestions are proposed here.**

**First, in the context of the escalation of clergy sexual abuse, we need to de-clericalize the church to make it a sanctuary for all. The church should initiate ministries to accompany clergy in their restorative journey from addiction to clericalism.**

**Along with that, the church must transform itself into a community of deep solidarity with the survivors, believing in them, standing with them, and ensuring them justice, healing, and restoration.**

## World Council of Churches

### Central Committee Minutes On

# Various Pressing Issues

>>> *Contd. from Page 5 Col. 5*

to work together in addressing humanitarian and social challenges in Ethiopia.

## 5. SAYFO1915 (Syriac-Aramaic-Assyrian) Genocide

Recalling the 'minutes' adopted by the WCC 11th Assembly, the Central Committee:

**Requests** the general secretary to make preparations for observing the 110th anniversary of SAYFO1915 in 2025.

**Encourages** the follow-up to the Assembly Minute's request for information on this matter to be provided to WCC member churches for the purposes of education and awareness-raising.

## 6. Environmental consequences of war in Ukraine

The Central Committee continues to monitor with great concern the dangerous, destructive and deadly consequences of Russia's illegal and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine, including during the period of our meeting over these recent days. We express once again the international ecumenical fellowship's grief and dismay at the escalating toll of lives lost and communities destroyed.

We also lift up on this occasion the vast environmental impact of this ongoing conflict, including resulting from the destruction of the Kakhovka dam on 6 June 2023. In addition to the widespread flooding of downstream communities,

prompting an urgent need for population evacuation and humanitarian assistance, the destruction of the dam will have a significant environmental impact in the longer term on a much larger geographical area and population.

We also raise again the threats to the environments and communities of the region and the world that military actions targeting or in the vicinity of the Zaporizhia Nuclear Power Plant pose.

**The Central Committee therefore:**

**Asks the General Secretary to exercise all possible efforts through the churches – including the proposed roundtable dialogue process – to bring this conflict and its appalling consequences to an end.**

## 7. Kosovo and Metochia

The Central Committee expresses its concern regarding the volatile situation in Kosovo and Metochia, and its effects on the legal and religious rights of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the region. The central committee:

**Requests** the General Secretary to consult with the Serbian Orthodox Church and with ecumenical, inter-religious and other partners, to discern ways in which the WCC might contribute to reducing tensions and mitigating risks of further escalation and conflict in the region.

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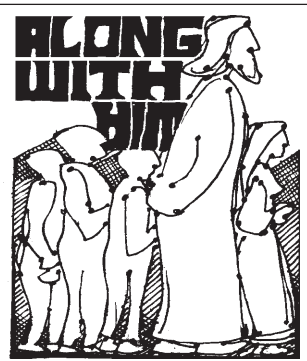
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5. For references, see as well: <https://www.oikoumene.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/ADOPTED-PIC01.8-Minute-on-Consequences-of-the-2020-Nagorno-Karabakh-War.pdf>; <https://un.worldidea.org/wea-and-wcc-call-on-azerbaijan-for-the-immediate-lifting-of-the-blockade-of-nagorno-karabakh/> – **WCC News**

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Mammen Varkey

*After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberius; and he revealed himself in this way. Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat; but that night they caught nothing.*  
John 21: 1 - 3 (RSV)

It is quite clear that when the Risen Lord told his disciples, through the two women, 'to go to Galilee', Matt 28:10, he was not asking them to go back to their original profession of 'fishing'. He was asking his disciples who had run away from the cross at Calvary, to go back to Galilee and to re-dedicate themselves to the mission they had committed themselves to, and inaugurated in, Galilee, the mission of 'fishing of men'. Mark 1: 17. And to re-engage themselves fully in

the mission that they were immersed in, along with their Master.

**They, the majority, went for 'fishing of fish'!**

But, unbelievably, having reached Galilee, one of the chief disciples of Jesus, Simon Peter, decided to go for fishing! Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing". John 21: 3. Most surprisingly, the other six disciples were not disturbed! Instead, they responded to Peter saying, "We will go with you." We casually read these verses and ignore what is stated there, as if

## Inauguration Of A New Way – 1

# The Risen Jesus Revealed Himself In This 'Way'

it is the narration of an ordinary incident! But is it not terribly disturbing, shocking? Not one or two disciples, but seven of them, that is the majority of the eleven disciples, ignored that they had been called out of their profession of fishing, 'to be fishers of men'. In a way, they were declaring that they would better go for fishing, than to be 'fishers of men'!

### Have a deep reflection

Should we not, very deeply, reflect on that act of the majority of the specially chosen disciples, even after they were assured that their Master had conquered death and had risen? They had been called and commissioned to be 'fishers of men' but they rejected that 'way' and went for fishing of fish! How do we understand that?

**The lessons from the response of the Risen Lord are unforgettable, inescapable**

The response of the Risen Lord, recorded by John, to the unbelievable rejection of his disciples is most amazing and is invaluable. **Have we ever cared to have a profound reflection on that?** The Risen Lord had all the power. He himself said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been

given to me." Matt. 28: 18.

**Though he was the One with all the power in his hands, still, how did he respond, according to John, to that situation?**

**1. The Risen Lord did not issue an inviolable order**

The Risen Lord did not issue an inescapable order to the seven disciples who 'got into the boat', John 21: 3, to rush back to him and to present themselves before him without any delay to explain to him why they had gone back for fishing. Also to receive the orders regarding what they should do in future! **Instead, in a very significant act, the Risen Lord, their Master himself, walked to them, to the beach.**

**2. The Risen Lord, just as an ordinary man, stood on the beach. No words of rebuke!**

The Risen Lord went there, as an ordinary man. There was nothing extraordinary or great in him, or on him, to show that the one who stood on the beach was none else than the one who had conquered death! There was nothing physical, visible, to declare that he was their Risen Master. 'Yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.'

John 21:4! **With all love and**

**compassion, he called them, "Children." No scolding! No words of rebuke! No show of power and authority!!**

**3. The Risen One a hungry man, begs for food**

The Risen Lord who had burst open the tomb and had come out, stood on the beach before the very same disciples who had gone away from him for fishing! And he begged for food!! "Children, have you any fish?" John 21: 5 (RSV). **Their Risen Master appeared before them as a helpless, hungry man! Not as the Risen One with all the power!!**

These matters are of fundamental importance in the Risen Lord's new commission of the disciples for the mission 'unto the end of the earth'. Acts 1:8

**To be continued**

**In the next issue**

The 'Way' of the Risen Lord is the same as the 'Way' of Jesus of Nazareth

## LAMP UNTO THE FEET, LIGHT UNTO THE PATH

# Let Us Spread Light

A. V. Itty

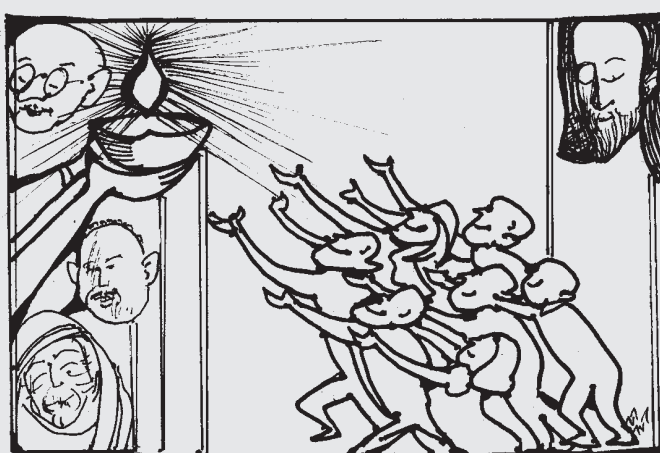
**"No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead he puts it on the lampstand, where it gives light for everyone in the house" (v.15).**

A woman in America, once took her children to show the house of Abraham Lincoln. On the way she told them a number of stories about Abraham Lincoln. She told her children that it was while he was the President, the cruel slave system was abolished and he had to sacrifice his life for that! Later on, one night that mother and her children were passing by that house. All the lights in that house were lit up. Seeing it, a child said: "Mom, it seems that Lincoln uncle has gone without switching off the lights!" The mother responded: "That is true dear. He kept the lights on so that we can have light!"

Even though no one lives in Lincoln's house, the lights in that house are not switched off, in memory of the light he lit up through his life! Lincoln's life model still gives lights to others. So many great people have left

the world, after lighting up their life-models for others. David Livingstone, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther, Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, Sadhu Kochukunju, Stanley Jones ..... The list continues!

Through our lives too, though not as bright as their lives, we should be able to light up at least a small light? If we could depart from this world, after lighting up at least a dim light, how nice it would be! "It is better to light a candle than to curse darkness", the adage tells us!



Prof. A. V. Itty, former Professor of English at Bishop Moore College, Mavelikara, is, now, engaged in the Evangelical, and Educational Ministry undertaken by ADORE in the Rayagada Dist. of Odisha. 94950 17850 (Mob)

**We see and move around in the light lit up by many who went before us. That is what Jesus told His disciples and what He tells us too, in the Scripture portion we meditate upon. Let us light up at least a small lamp, before we leave this world. May God help.**

### Food For Thought:

**The only way to cast out darkness is to spread light!**



**I WORRY  
because of the  
SEIZURE  
of  
IVORY,  
for sure**



## World Communion of Reformed Churches

### Decade for Climate Justice

## Seek a just eco-spirituality

“We need to move toward a just eco-spirituality that can ground us in God, help us to hear God’s call of discipleship on our lives, and spur us to action, so that we can use all of our time, talents, and treasures toward the radical and transformative climate justice that we need now, today.”

>>> **Contd. from Page 1 Col. 1**

“The book focuses on the issues surrounding justice and its manifestations. It highlights the struggles and sufferings of those on the margins, encouraging readers to reflect on their plight,” she said, specifically noting Job 12:7-10:

But ask the animals, and they will teach you;  
the birds of the air, and they will tell you;  
ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you;  
and the fish of the sea will declare to you.  
Who among all these does not know  
that the hand of the Lord has done this?  
In his hand is the life of every living thing  
and the breath of every human being. (NRSV)

“The dominant worldview today, however, that is at the root of dominant interpretations within Christianity, is a disordered one wherein we see humans as divorced from and superior to the rest of the natural world,” said Jessica Hetherington, an ecotheologian and ordained minister in The United Church of Canada.

“When we see ourselves as separate from, and superior to, the natural world around us, then we deny the scientific reality of evolution, and the way that human beings have emerged into an incredibly complex, interconnected and interdependent web of all that exists. Further, we then deny that God created all of creation, all of it, through the engine of evolution, and as we affirmed in our first creation story, that God called it good,” she said.

“We need to develop an eco-spirituality that seeks to become ever-more aware of the ways in which we are in community with all of life and what sustains it here on Earth. We need to become ever-more aware of the harms that we have caused to the Earth, especially through the climate crisis, and be able to listen to the cries of the Earth community,” she said. “And, we need to move toward a just eco-spirituality that can ground us in God, help us to hear God’s call of discipleship on our lives, and spur us to action, so that we can use all of our time, talents, and treasures toward the radical and transformative climate justice that we need now, today.”

The climate crisis “is not an accident, but it is a consequence of humanity’s failure to hear the groans of creation amidst the desire for more control and consumption of earthly resources,” said Eve Rebecca Parker, lecturer in modern theology at the University of Manchester. “It is a crisis of abuse, not just of the land, but of workers, of children, of Indigenous communities.”

“I want to suggest that what is needed is a politically charged theological response of anger and lament,” she said. “It is about acknowledging the need to be angry, and lament at the realities of the climate crisis, because as Christians we are taught to lament the injustices on earth, just as the biblical laments do, and name what is wrong, name the evils and resist such evils and in doing so express eschatological hope, by bearing witness to what should not be and therefore to what should be, and what will be, according to God’s promises.”

Jessica Bwali, Global Campaigns Associate for Tearfund, speaking as one of the marginalized youth, said, “Old people, people in power: allow young people to sit at the table and listen to them. Let them bring the ideas that they have. They may not be as polished or as realistic, but there is where the experience comes in as a leader—this is the direction we can take. If we can combine these generations, we can protect our environment.”

**“The Decade for Climate Justice is a concept that addresses the just division, fair sharing, and equitable distribution of the burdens of climate change, its mitigations, and responsibilities,” said Hefin Jones, senior lecturer at Cardiff University’s School of Biosciences, and moderator of the webinar, which was themed “Learning from the Earth, Witnessing for Climate Justice.”**

**The webinar launching the Decade for Climate Justice was held on 5 June, World Environment Day. Funds from Otto per Mille are used to support this initiative.**

– WCRC News

### To our beloved friends

My Yahoo Email Account was hacked and a false, bogus request was sent to all the friends in that group, for financial assistance. It is my sincere hope that no one in the group has, actually, been deceived. I am deeply sorry for all the troubles that the hacking might have caused to some of you.

I am sincerely grateful to those friends in my Yahoo Group who showed great concern and offered help in dealing with the hacking.

Very sincerely,  
Mammen Varkey, Editor in Chief, People's Reporter

## CHEER CHAT

We **LIVE** in the world  
when we **LOVE** it

– Rabindranath Tagore



## Centre for Theological Leadership Training

### Graduation Ceremony

## A Theological College With A Difference



Certificate, Bachelor and Post Graduate students, together with the Faculty and the Staff, at the Sixth Graduation Ceremony of the Centre for Theological Leadership and Training

**The Centre for Theological Leadership Training (CTLT), Cayman Islands, held its Sixth Graduation Ceremony at the Victory Tabernacle of the Church of God of Prophecy, George Town, on 25 June. The Institution offers courses on all aspects of theology and pastoral care, at the Certificate and Diploma, Bachelor and Masters and Doctorate levels. The Centre was begun by the Director of CTLT Rt. Rev. Dr. P. J. Lawrence, who is richly experienced in offering theological education.**

The objective of the CTLT is to train people interested in knowing more about the Bible, and to be better equipped for ministry in their churches. Since it began in 2016 it has grown, year by year. It, now, offers a very wide range of courses ranging from christian counselling to Old and New Testament History, the Gospels, the Epistles, and special areas of study designed to be relevant in a modern changing world. Classes are conducted in the evenings and weekends, via Zoom. It has enabled students to join the course from literally all over the world, including India, Africa, the Philippines, Canada, the USA,

Jamaica and the Netherlands.

The Graduation Ceremony began with the CTLT students of Certificate, Bachelor and Masters Courses, marching into the church, to the tune of “*I’m marching upwards to Zion, the beautiful City of God*,” while members of their families, came to cheer them on their path.

Masters student Janet Durran read from 2 Timothy 2.11 - 16: “It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself. Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.”

Bishop Dr. Clayton Martin, Chairman, CTLT, welcomed all the participants, recognising the graduates, distinguished members of the Faculty, and the Guest Speaker, Mr. Torrance

Bobb, the Superintendent of the First Assembly of God in the Cayman Islands. He spoke about how our eternal home is in heaven, and how, through every generation, God has raised up men and women to preach his Holy Word to change the eternal destiny of others, too.

**Contd. Page 5 Col. 1 ..>>>**

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The views expressed in this paper are not necessarily those of the editors.